

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 15, 2013 MEETING OF THE MUSLIM AMERICAN ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Muslim American Advisory Council (“MAAC” or “the Council”), pursuant to notice duly given, held a Meeting on January 15, 2013 at 3:00 p.m. in the James R. Thompson Center, 100 West Randolph Street, Room 2-025, Chicago, Illinois 60601.

MAAC Members Present:

1. Sohair Omar, Co-Chair
2. Kareem M. Irfan, Esq., Co-Chair
3. Dr. Bambade Shakoor Abdullah
4. Dr. Irfan Ahmad (via audio conference)
5. Murad Moosa Bhaidani (via audio conference)
6. Mumtaz Champs
7. Clyde Elameen
8. S. Jafer Hasnain
9. Dzafer Kulenovic
10. Laila Muhammad
11. Najjar Abdul-Musawwir (via audio conference)
12. Salim Al Nurridin
13. Ahmed Rehab

MAAC Members Absent:

1. Tariq El-Amin
2. Inamul Haq
3. Nia Odeoti-Hassan
4. Wesley Lebron
5. Tariq Malhance
6. Maaria Mozaffar, Esq.
7. Rami Nashashibi
8. Eboo Patel
9. Imad Rahman
10. Dr. Mohammed Zaher Sahloul
11. Anas Usman

MAAC Staff Present:

1. Abir Ahmed

Guests Present:

1. Sam Nutm, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Trade and Investment
2. Amalia Rioja, Office of the Governor
3. Syed Zaffer, Governor’s Office of Management and Budget

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

The MAAC meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m. by Co-Chair Omar.

The Staff Member of the Board, Ms. Ahmed, called the roll. There being ten (10) members physically present and three (3) members participating via audio conference, a quorum was reached.

II. Co-Chairs' Remarks

Co-Chair Irfan and Co-Chair Omar welcomed Members of the Council and MAAC Staff. They indicated that they would work diligently with the Council to move its mission forward. Welcoming the Governor's appointment of Co-Chair Omar, Co-Chair Irfan expressed his appreciation of the professional and collaborative approach already adopted by her, and reminded MAAC Members of the need for positive, cooperative engagement in effectively discharging the significant advisory role of the Council. Co-Chair Omar asserted that the Council would submit reports biannually and hold meetings every other month.

III. Presentation of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Middle East Trade Missions

Mr. Ntum presented the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Office of Trade and Investment's ("OTI") upcoming trade missions to the Middle East: (i) Trade Show Exhibition at Arab Health 2013 in Dubai; and (ii) Trade Show Exhibition at MEDEXPO Saudi Arabia 2013 in Jeddah. Discussion ensued. Mr. Ntum expressed a desire to continue to work with MAAC to improve OTI's trade relations with the Middle East.

IV. Overview of Illinois Ethics Laws

Ms. Rioja explained the Illinois Ethics Laws, including the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, and the Open Meetings Act to MAAC in detail.

V. Presentation of Governor Quinn's Spring 2013 Legislative Priorities

As a supplement to the presentation on Governor Quinn's Spring 2013 Legislative Priorities, Mr. Zaffer delivered a presentation on how the Illinois budget is currently divided and what financial problems the State faces by comparing the current budget to the budget five years earlier. A pension squeeze is forcing other areas of the budget to be cut. MAAC will take these issues into account when making policy recommendations to the Governor.

VI. Committee Reports

Co-Chair Omar proposed to dissolve the Steering Committee of MAAC. The Members of MAAC concurred. Co-Chair Omar inquired about the three (3) committees of MAAC. It was stated that Ms. Mozaffar led the Legislative Affairs Committee. Mr. Rehab agreed to continue to lead the Communications Committee, previously known as the Communications Outreach Committee. Mr. Hasnain agreed to continue to lead the Economic Development Committee.

The Members of MAAC collectively agreed that MAAC should maintain broad representation of the Muslim-American community in Illinois, including Turkish-Americans. Co-Chair Omar stated that she would be open to any recommendations.

VII. Other Business

Dr. Abdullah discussed legislation that she is proposing concerning violence prevention in the Chicago area. Because of the high crime rates in the City of Chicago, Dr. Abdullah advocates for increased job opportunities for the youth population. Dr. Abdullah stated that she is working with State Senator Mattie Hunter on violence prevention legislation.

Mr. Rehab presented his public educational campaign called “MyJihad: Reclaiming Islam,” which seeks to share the proper meaning of “Jihad” as believed and practiced by the majority of Muslims. MyJihad has received national and international recognition.

VIII. Adjournment

The Council Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by:

Abir Ahmed

Legal Dunn Fellow, Office of the Governor